


LAS VEGAS POLICE DEPARTMENT	ADMINISTRATION
SUBJECT: <i>Restraints</i>	NUMBER: OPR.9
EFFECTIVE DATE: <i>9 September 2010</i>	REVIEW DATE:
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES:	APPROVED: 
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: <i>ADM.02.02, OPR02.02</i>	NMSA:

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the use of handcuffs and other restraints.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Las Vegas Police Department as a matter of procedure to handcuff individuals to preserve the safety of the public, the detainee and the Officer. The officer is responsible for the safe custody of his or her prisoner. See also OPR 8 Transporting Prisoners.

The department requires officers to exercise safety awareness by carefully restraining most prisoners (except children) who must be transported to a jail or other location.

III. APPLICABILITY:

Applies to all Las Vegas Police Department Police Officers of the Las Vegas Police Department.

IV. REFERENCES:

NONE

IV. DEFINTIONS:

A. Handcuffs – This device is a mechanical means to secure the wrists together.

B. Ankle shackles- This device is a mechanical means to secure the ankles together.

C. Flexi cuffs - This device is a mechanical means to secure the wrists together.

- D. **Waist shackles** – This device is a mechanical means to secure the hands to the waist.
- E. **Hobble Strap** – This device is a mechanical means to prevent or limit motion by tethering one or more legs.

NOTE: All of the above devices are an issued/authorized temporary restraint device intended to restrict and control a subjects actions to preserve the safety of the Officer, the public and the detainee. They shall be utilized in accordance with applicable department policies and training.

VI. PROCEDURE:

A. Arrested Persons

1. Officers shall handcuff or restrain arrested persons when they reasonably believe that the suspect poses a danger to the officer or other persons. Officers shall handcuff any person arrested for a any crime be it felony or misdemeanor.
2. The nature of the restraint chosen to subdue a suspect and the related method of transporting a suspect to jail or to court depends on the level of threat against the officer. A minimal threat may require restraint through handcuffing, plastic handcuffs, or wearing seat belts. A threat of property damage or injury posed by the suspect may require restraint through a waist belt, leg or ankle restraints or a hobble strap.

B. Handcuffs

1. Officers shall handcuff a person with the hands in back, palms facing outward, but may choose to handcuff hands in front if the prisoner:
 - a. is obviously pregnant; or
 - b. has a physical handicap; or
 - c. has injuries that may be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.
2. Officers shall not handcuff a person to the transport vehicle or any part of it, or to any other fixed object such as a door or pipe. Officers may handcuff a person to a designated handcuffing point when necessary.
3. Officers **shall double-lock handcuffs** to help ensure prisoner and officer safety. Double locking reduces the chance of picking the lock or of the bracelet accidentally closing further.

C. Ankle shackles:

Ankle shackles may be used by officers when transporting any prisoner they have reason to believe might be an escape risk.

D. Flexi-cuffs:

Plastic handcuffs may be used when officers take into custody several prisoners or when a prisoner requires multiple restraints. Officers must understand that plastic handcuffs once applied can only be removed with a knife or pair of shears.

IV. PROCEDURES - Persons not arrested

- A. If officers have a reasonable suspicion that a suspect has been involved with a violent offense or has a weapon, then handcuffs may be applied while officers investigate the possibility that criminal conduct occurred.
- B. Persons not arrested but who are subject to investigative detention may be restrained under the following circumstances.
 - 1. Subject shall be handcuffed only as long as reasonably necessary to accomplish the investigative goal.
 - 2. Subject shall be advised that they are “not under arrest” and be explained the reason for being restrained.
 - 2. Handcuffing shall be accomplished with minimal discomfort to the suspect.
 - 3. Officers shall limit the number and type of restraints used on the subject to what is reasonably necessary to accomplish safety within established norms.

V. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

A. Positional asphyxia:

Officers shall not hog-tie suspects by placing them in a prone position with the hands and ankles bound from behind with handcuffs, belts, or other devices. As soon as any suspect who is lying on his or her stomach has been handcuffed, officers shall roll the suspect onto his or her side, or place the suspect in a sitting position.

- 1. Positional asphyxia occurs when the position of the body interferes with respiration. A prone, hog-tied suspect may suffocate. Intoxication, presence of a head injury, obesity, and physical disability are all circumstances that can increase the possibility of suffocation.

2. Ascertain if the suspect has used alcohol or drugs recently or suffers from any cardiac or respiratory problem. Monitor the suspect and obtain medical treatment if necessary.

VII. ATTACHMENTS:

None